

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 EUR-25 IO-15 ISO-00 SR-02 ORM-03 AID-20 OMB-01

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R 031411Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9950

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

USINT CAIRO

AMCONSUL JERUSALEM

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION USUN NY

C O N F I D E N T I A L TEL AVIV 7679

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, IS, EG

SUBJECT: SETTLEMENT OF SOVIET IMMIGRANTS AT RAFAH JUNCTION

REF: TEL AVIV 4829

1. AS PREVIOUSLY REPORTED (REFTEL), SETTLEMENT DEPARTMENT OF WORLD ZIONIST ORGANIZATION (WZO) HAS PLANS FOR SETTLING YOUNG SOVIET IMMIGRANTS WITH PROFESSIONAL AND TECHNICAL BACKGROUNDS IN RAFAH JUNCTION AREA AND IN GOLAN HEIGHTS. INITIAL GROUP OF 22 SOVIET IMMIGRANTS (16 ADULTS AND 6 CHILDREN) MOVED WITHIN PAST MONTH TO TEMPORARY HOUSING LOCATED AT MOSHAV SADOT IN RAFAH JUNCTION AREA. DURING RECENT VISIT TO SADOT, EMBOFFS HAD OPPORTUNITY TO TALK TO SEVERAL SOVIET IMMIGRANTS AND TO OBSERVE CONSTRUCTION AT REGIONAL CENTER SITE.

2. SOVIET IMMIGRANTS INFORMED EMBOFFS THAT THEY EXPECTED TO MOVE INTO HOUSING AT REGIONAL CENTER IN ABOUT ONE YEAR. IN
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MEANTIME, THEY WOULD BE LIVING AND WORKING AT MOSHAV SADOT.

THEY SAID THAT ANOTHER GROUP OF SOVIET IMMIGRANTS WOULD BE MOVING TO SADOT WITHIN ONE MONTH. WITH ASSISTANCE OF GOI THEY HOPED TO SET UP LIGHT INDUSTRY INCLUDING ELECTRONICS UP REGIONAL CENTER. IMMIGRANTS SAID THAT MOST OF THEM HAD LIVED IN ISRAEL FOR APPROXIMATELY ONE YEAR, BUT HAD PRESSED TO SETTLE IN RAFAH JUNCTION AREA BECAUSE OF CHALLENGE IN SETTING UP NEW SETTLEMENT IN AREA IMPORTANT TO ISRAEL.

3. CONSTRUCTION OF REGIONAL CENTER HAS THUS FAR BEEN LIMITED TO BUILDING APPROACH ROADS AND CLEARING AREA FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING. ISRAELIS ARE IN PROCESS OF CONSTRUCTING NEW FOUR LANE ROAD FROM VICINITY OF RAFAH TOWN IN GAZA STRIP TO MOSHAV SADOT. IMMEDIATELY WEST OF SADOT, CONSTRUCTION IS WELE UNDERWAY ON FIVE KILOMETER ACCESS ROAD TO SITE OF REGIONAL CENTER AT END OF ACCESS ROAD ABOUT FIFTY ACRES OF LAND ARE BEING CLEARED FOR CONSTRUCTION OF HOUSING.

4. COMMENT: SOVIET IMMIGRANTS AT SADOT WERE EXTREMELY VAGUE ABOUT WHAT THEY WOULD BE DOING UNTIL THEY MOVE INTO REGIONAL CENTER. AT THIS POINT IN TIME THEY APPEAR TO HAVE LITTLE TO KEEP THEM OCCUPIED AND WE SUSPECT THAT THEY WILL BE SITTING ON THEIR HANDS FOR NEXT YEAR. THIS UNDOUBTEDLY WOULD HAVE AN EFFECT ON THEIR MORALE AND COULD LEAD THE GOI TO HOLD OFF SETTLING ADDITIONAL IMMIGRANTS IN AREA UNTIL AT LEAST SOME FACILITIES AT REGIONAL CENTER ARE READY FOR USE.
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